



PITTSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT BERKSHIRE COUNTY SRT

August 20, 2013

TO: Chief Michael Wynn / Pittsfield Police Department
Lieutenant Michael Winston / Berkshire County SRT Team Commander
Susan Brown / Homeland Security Program Manager
Chief Mark Babineau / Ludlow Fire Department (CBRNE Sub-Committee)

FROM: Officer Matthew Kirchner / Berkshire County SRT Team Sniper / Operator

RE: Equipment Proposal- Phase 2 (Tactical Ballistic Vests)

“Phase One” of the replacement ballistic vest project went extremely well and all equipment has been delivered and placed into service. The new equipment is working extremely well and was a much needed update for the aged and tired equipment that was previously in service. The new ballistic vests provide greater protection at a much lighter weight. The tactical plate carrier systems have also provided an outstanding level of protection for our sniper/observer team and will enhance our Sniper program. This weight savings and greater level of protection provide a much better tactical advantage for the operators of the BCSRT and was a much needed leap forward for the teams PPE.

The purpose of this proposal is to request funding for “Phase two” replacement ballistic tactical vests and tactical response plate carrier systems for the Berkshire County Special Response Team (Berkshire County SRT), utilizing monies to be funded through the Western Massachusetts Homeland Security Council.

In keeping with the efforts to streamline and standardize SWAT equipment throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I have tried to work closely with the other LEC’s (Law Enforcement Councils). It is the goal of all of the statewide LEC’s to come up with standardized equipment across the state so that we better serve our communities. Our team has been very fortunate to have been recently provided with several pieces of equipment funded through the WMRHSAC and this new equipment has proven itself very useful.

We have reviewed the Berkshire County Special Response Teams equipment needs and feel that the remaining ballistic vests currently in service are in need of replacement per the manufacturer's five year recommended service life. The Berkshire County SRT has recently added additional personnel from the Berkshire County Sheriff's Department to our tactical team and we anticipate adding additional personnel in the coming months. We have also begun the process of adding additional "Sniper/Observer Teams" to our unit and will need to equip these teams properly. We are requesting the Western Massachusetts Homeland Security Council consider for funding, the proposed "Phase Two" Ballistic tactical vests and ballistic rated tactical plate carrier systems with polymer plates, to be utilized by the Berkshire County SRT.

Currently our team is called upon to deploy all over the Western Massachusetts Region for a multitude of incidents. Currently we have thirteen (13) new vests just placed into service and fall within the five year replacement cycle dictated by vest manufacturers and DOJ guidelines. Of the 30 current team members on the Berkshire County SRT, ten (10) vests were purchased by the Pittsfield Police Department in 2008 and are currently still within their five year duty cycle. These ten (10) vests will be at the "end" of their recommended service life in September of 2013. All of the remaining vests are older than five years and need to be replaced as soon as possible. The last seven (7) vests of the remaining vests in service are approximately 10-15 years in age and are heavily used and worn extensively. My goal is to replace the remainder of the older ballistic vests currently in service as soon as possible. My proposal is that the remaining (17) vests will be replaced and will come out of "frontline service". These seventeen (17) vests would be retained and stored in an emergency equipment cache for future emergency use and MCI scenario training events. By replacing these seventeen (17) vests, we will have updated all of our tactical vests with current and necessary body armor and we will increase the safety for tactical operators and greatly reduce the load carried by them.

In speaking with Command Staff of the Berkshire County SRT we agree that the "Phase Two" purchase of the remaining seventeen (17) new Protech ballistic vests is necessary to operational safety and public safety. The vests specified will include special threat rifle plates (*NIJ 0101.06 compliant Level III rating*) to provide greater safety for tactical operators. The replacement of these vests will be of great benefit to the Berkshire County SRT and to the citizens protected in the Western Mass region. The remaining seventeen (17) new tactical vests are greatly needed and would fill an enormous void in the current equipment we are using. We are also requesting that an additional four (4) Protech Tac-PR outer plate carrier systems be purchased to include special threat rifle plates (*NIJ 0101.06 compliant Level III rating*). Based upon the proposal of seventeen (17) new tactical vest systems and four (4) Protech Tac-PR plate carrier units, we are requesting the Western Massachusetts Homeland Security Council approve the amount of \$48,480.00 to be

utilized for the above mentioned equipment. All of the above mentioned equipment is currently listed on Massachusetts State Contract pricing (*Under contract # LAW14*) and provides substantial cost savings under the current contract.

I have personally reviewed the products that are being manufactured by Protech Armored Products and feel that this equipment offers significant improvements in providing the best possible safety for public safety personnel and our communities. In speaking with Barbara Normandin of All Sports Heroes, she advised that the vests would take approximately 6-8 weeks after order to be delivered. Therefore I ask that the Berkshire County Special Response Team should be provided with new ballistic rated tactical vests and tactical plate carriers to provide the best level of protection possible for our tactical operators.

Should you have any questions, or require additional information, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

Officer Matthew Kirchner
Pittsfield Police Department
Berkshire County SRT Sniper / Operator